

The Garrick Remedy

JOSEPH BOUCHARDY

THE GARRICK REMEDY

(Garrick Médecin)

by

Joseph Bouchardy

translated by

Talia Felix

mOnocle-Lash Anti-Press

REVENANTS SERIES

September, 2015

Translator's Introduction

Joseph Bouchardy was born in March of 1810, into a family of painters and engravers. At first it seemed like he would follow in the family footsteps, for in his teens he took up an apprenticeship with the famous English engraver Samuel William Reynolds (1773 - 1835.) Reynolds had toured a series of engravings in Paris in 1826, and it was probably at that time that he accepted Bouchardy as his pupil among several other French students, which he brought to London for training.

Reynolds was famous as an engraver, not unsuccessful as a painter, and was a man with some strong connections to the London theater scene – he was good friends with Samuel Whitbread, whose father had helped to rebuild and manage the Theatre Royal Drury Lane after it burned down in 1809. Reynolds too had become a shareholder in the theater, and he befriended many of the managers and cast members. His familiarity with the crew was so close that he sometimes even assisted the actors with doing their makeup. He was known at this time to have his art students practice their skills by engraving portraits of his actor friends. Perhaps it was Reynolds who developed Bouchardy's interest in the theater? Beraldi's *Graveurs du XIX Siècle* claims that Bouchardy was “equally” talented at engraving as he was with his ultimate career as a playwright, but that he quit his original trade because the French did not hold the same respect for engravers as did the English. A few prints from Bouchardy's short-lived mezzotint career seem to exist, mostly being copies of famous paintings.

Not yet aged twenty, Bouchardy found himself back in Paris and associating with a group of young artists who would ultimately be known as the Bouzingo. The group began circa 1829 as the Petit Cénacle, being associates of the librarian Charles Nodier's literary group the Cénacle. Members of the Petit Cénacle tended to share an obsession with British authors and medieval literature, with several members having anglicized or medievalized their names in tribute. Their rowdy behavior and bizarre style of dress (based on foreign and historical garments) eventually got them booted from the Nodier group, at which point they changed their name to the Jeunes-France, and later to the Bouzingo.

One member of the fellowship was a promising writer named Petrus Borel. In 1829, Victor Hugo approached him to assist in winning public approval for his new play, *Hernani* – a period piece set in 16th century Spain, with dialogue written in rhymed verse. It was a throwback to an earlier form of play, which was sure to be hated by the Classicists who were then in power in the Parisian theatrical world; but it was very much to the taste of the Bouzingo and the new generation of Romantics. Members of the group studied the play's script in advance of its premier, and pre-planned their reactions for the first showing. On opening night, the Romantics went wild with their enthusiasm, and the excitement turned into actual physical violence in the aisles. The incident became known as the Battle of *Hernani*, and sparked a media sensation which assured the success of the play – and thereby, the success of the Romantic movement.

It was after the *Hernani* incident that Bouchardy began to show definite interest in the theater. He took to writing

plays, and in time became one of the best-known playwrights in France, even receiving a knighthood from the Legion of Honor for his accomplishments. However, his success was not instantaneous, and in the mid-1830s he was still unknown and was writing articles for a weekly newspaper called *le Monde Dramatique* (English: *The World of Drama*.) The paper was run by his friend from the Petit-Cénacle, Gérard de Nerval, and by his own brother, Anatole Bouchardy. It was in *Monde Dramatique* that his short story “Garrick Médecin” (“The Garrick Remedy”) was first published in two installments, in 1835 and 1836.

It would seem that the story went largely unnoticed, for it was never printed again in any other medium; yet, in 1841, Bouchardy’s old Bouzingo friend, Théophile Gautier, wrote the following in a review for a play by Jules de Prémaray called *Docteur Robin*:—

“Who’d have thought? It’s another of the endless stories of Garrick, of Talma, of Kean, curing some poor girl who has fallen in love with these actors by showing themselves to her as common men under the most disagreeable conditions. [...] but alas! Who can be trusted? Mr. Jules de Prémaray, a name more pure than Himalayan snow, doubtless a good and studious young man, who was so recently able to request in *Les Petits Affiches* a collaborator of good family, ‘to work together on fine vaudevilles,’ indeed this fresh-face, this poet, this newborn genius, stole an idea from Bouchardy, published six years ago in a periodical and already adapted by seven or eight writers!”

Copyright laws were loose in those days, and adapting an existing story into a play without crediting the original author was sometimes frowned upon but not normally illegal. There's no evidence that Bouchardy gained from all these adaptations of his little story, but ultimately he probably wasn't harmed by it – he went on to have his own string of majorly successful plays, all of which have been forgotten in the ensuing centuries, but in his time were talked about with the sort of awe and admiration that might be used in our era to discuss Andrew Lloyd Webber on Broadway or Steven Spielberg in movies. Gautier declared that Bouchardy was to Victor Hugo what Christopher Marlowe was to William Shakespeare. Yet, as befalls so many in the world of entertainment, Bouchardy outlived his popularity. His romantic ideas which had been fashionable in the 1830s and 40s were outmoded by the 1860s. The *Cambridge Guide to Theatre* declares that “his name became almost a byword for the rather naive, old-fashioned melodrama.” By the time of his death, aged about 59 years, he was reportedly suffering from depression and “broken, destroyed by grief.” He'd been hit hard by his decline, and was said to always spend his days moping in his garden. He died on May 28th, 1870, and was interred in the church of Saint-Roch, Paris.

* * *

While Bouchardy himself never seems to have endeavored to make a play based on *Garrick Médecin*, according to Gautier there were many other writers that did. The two most successful versions were the aforementioned

Docteur Robin and a later play, *Sullivan*. *Docteur Robin* more closely followed Bouchardy's original story; nevertheless, it was an English-language play based on *Sullivan* that became an even greater success: T.W. Robertson's play *David Garrick*. This play enjoyed a good seventy years of popularity after its 1864 premier, and has been called the most successful play of the 19th century. It was based on *Sullivan* – even directly translating some passages – yet seemed to preserve, or else recreate, details from Bouchardy's original story including the use of Garrick as its hero over the fictional George Sullivan. Robertson never acknowledged Bouchardy's story and only said he chose Garrick for his hero because “his name was public property” without explaining why that should be superior to a completely fictional character. It seems unlikely that Robertson would have read *Le Monde Dramatique*, an unsuccessful French magazine which was by then over 25 years out of print; but it is possible he may have known about the popular show *Docteur Robin* and been padding his *Sullivan* adaption with ideas from this similarly plotted piece without realizing they were based on a mutual source.

The aforesaid man, David Garrick (1717 – 1779), was perhaps the most famous actor of the 18th century. If not, he was unquestionably the most important to history. He was best known for his Shakespearean roles, but also gave successful portrayals of contemporary parts. He became manager of the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, in partnership with James Lacy, in 1747. Many important and influential changes were made under Garrick's management. These included the standardization of “natural” acting in performances, in contrast to the bombastic, artificial style that had generally been used before

that time, as well as innovations like replacing chandeliers hung over the stage with more effective theatrical lighting, and changing seating arrangements so that audience members could no longer be seated on the stage itself (an old practice, which many readers have seen put to use in the play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where the wedding party sits on the edge of the stage during the play-within-a-play, "Pyramus and Thisby".) These advancements made Garrick a hero to the theatrical world, with his fame only declining after the rise of motion pictures in the 20th century. It's of note that Bouchardy's original story does not actually state the name of DAVID Garrick anywhere in the text – "Garrick" alone was expected to mean something instantly recognizable to the reader. There are also appearances within the story from two of Garrick's contemporaries, Colley Cibber (1671 – 1757) and Samuel Foote (1720 – 1777).

Another thing that the story never states is the year of its setting. A person reading the work, without knowing the identity of Garrick in advance, might not even recognize it as a period piece till the reference to Anna's powdered hair appears more than halfway in. We can assume from Garrick's age in the story, dated against the year of Cibber's demise, that Bouchardy's tale is set around the year 1757. Bouchardy further displays a poor knowledge of the era, leading to some anachronisms. For example: Miss Holborn's hair « *la Titus* and gown « *la vierge* would not be fashionable – much less out of fashion – for another forty years, Regent Street did not yet exist, and even a prodigy like Thomas Chatterton (born 1752) was a little young to have yet published anything that Lady Anna would read.

Bouchardy made a few other troublesome choices in the writing. It's not surprising that his fame came as a script writer instead of as an author of literature, as he shows a good sense of dialogue and plot but not much skill with setting up atmosphere, and very little skill with formatting. Punctuation was not really standardized the way we know it till the end of the 19th century, but Bouchardy makes some decisions that were even unusual at the time and would be considered horrific examples today. He uses no quotation marks, leaving one to guess when somebody starts talking, uses commas in lieu of periods, and commonly employs ellipses in places where any other kind of punctuation mark could have served. One paragraph, punctuated in the original manner, would read:

The steward bowed respectfully and so did. You see, gentlemen, said the Duke to the doctors, you see the situation of a father who has been negligent enough to allow his daughter to see the infamous farce of Romeo and Juliet, the veritable perdition of young girls, a true literary ambush created for the detriment of fathers... Oh! I don't know what I'd give, he said, pounding his forehead. Yes, gentlemen, yes! I offer twenty-thousand pounds sterling to the one who will cure my daughter, who will bestow me with peace of mind and body, for I have developed a fever, and I've wasted away from the sight of this. Twenty-thousand pounds sterling, said the deep voice of the steward whose heart would race if he laid eyes on but one gold piece. Hold on to your guineas, said one of the doctors as he left, and give your daughter some fatherly guidance. I have given commands, replied the father. Give that

medicine with some sugar, said the second as he followed the first. So that they may be content, said the Duke, at my exasperation! Above all, continued the third one while following after the two others, have her do plenty of traveling. I would sooner send her to the East Indies, for a change of air, said the Duke, while shutting the door behind them.

I normally like to preserve the original punctuation and paragraph formatting as much as the translation will allow, but to enhance readability I was obliged to modernize this text well above my usual tendencies.

Another change I had to make was to the title of the piece itself. *Garrick Mèdecin* might be most literally translated as *Physician Garrick* or *Healer Garrick*. As previously mentioned, the average person today knows less about David Garrick than could be expected in the past, and so would probably not catch the joke, i.e., that Garrick was not a physician. It is important to translate not just the words, but the meaning of the combined words into something the translator's audience will understand in a similar way. This is why I have settled on the name *The Garrick Remedy* as the most suitable replacement, for its descriptiveness without assuming foreknowledge of Garrick. A previous version of this translation, with some small differences in wording, was published in *Romance Magazine* under the title "The Acting Physician", which I felt was a more suitable title for the target audience of that publication, who were likely to neither know nor care about David Garrick or Joseph Bouchardy (indeed, the magazine actually had so little concern for Bouchardy that

they misprinted my own name as the author of the story and omitted Bouchardy's name altogether, much to my chagrin.)

Translation of forgotten public domain texts is an unhappy venture, where the translator is in effect translating texts that have gone untranslated because no one cares to see them translated, and as a result there is little appreciation, excitement or support to be found for these projects. I would like to thank Olchar E. Lindsann for being a rare supporter.

— Talia Felix

The Garrick Remedy

"Many an illness is a mistake, and a mistake an illness."

—*La Rochefoucault* [sic]

A Duke of Tavistock—who was, I believe, related through female lines to the Southampton lineage—sought to prove to three doctors, not that they could, but that they had to cure his daughter. The three doctors maintained that the malady of the young miss was purely a harmless puppy love, and that he alone could bring it down by the power of distractions and guidance.

"In the end," the Duke told them, "the illness makes alarming progress each day... from the day that this unhappy malady revealed itself, my daughter has obstinately refused to wed the baronet; I, wanting to know the reason, and I, getting the vexation of finding out her wretched passion for a damned actor, I did everything to distract from it—and the more I showed her of the world, the more weary with it she seemed. I have recommended to her the holy words of the clergymen, and she neglects them for the dastardly works of Shakespeare: I then take the measure of removing her from London; and, to overcome the boredom, the wretched girl produces verse and poetry that she addresses to this clown from Hell. To keep it up—what can I do? What can I do? If the malady progresses any further, I will be ruined."

"Don't speak so of her malady, milord," said one of the doctors, "speak of her elevated state."

"Or her extravagance," said the second one.

"Or her foolishness," said the third.

The Duke tried to respond, when a man of elongated figure, in the form of a steward, entered hurriedly. The Duke raised himself up, and the newcomer told him in a voice half stupid, half bewailing: "Milord Duke, it has been impossible to intercept that damned letter."

"Impossible?" replied the Duke.

"The courier was more prompt than I was."

"It required being more prompt than the courier."

"I had hoped..."

"You blockhead..."

"I assure you, milord, that it..."

"Shut up."

The steward bowed respectfully and so did.

"You see, gentlemen," said the Duke to the doctors, "you see the situation of a father who has been negligent enough to allow his daughter to see the infamous farce of *Romeo and Juliet*, the veritable perdition of young girls, a true literary ambush created for the detriment of fathers... Oh! I don't know what I'd give," he said, pounding his forehead. "Yes—gentlemen, yes! I offer twenty-thousand pounds sterling to the one who will cure my daughter, who will bestow me with peace of mind and body; for I have developed a fever, and I've wasted away from the sight of this."

"Twenty-thousand pounds sterling," said the deep voice of the steward, whose heart would race if he laid eyes on but one gold piece.

"Hold on to your guineas," said one of the doctors as he left, "and give your daughter some fatherly guidance."

"I have given commands," replied the father.

"Give that medicine with some sugar," said the second

as he followed the first.

"So that they may be content," said the Duke, "at my exasperation!"

"Above all," continued the third one as he followed after the two others, "have her do plenty of traveling."

"I would sooner send her to the East Indies, for a change of air," said the Duke, while shutting the door behind them.

The doctors being gone, the steward—desiring but little to remain with his master—furtively stole himself away, and the Duke found himself alone putting himself to march rapidly about his enormous parlour, muttering thousands upon thousands of curses; and after having closed the great damask curtains, he opened a superb marquetry bureau. He crossed his *robe de chambre* over his ribs, seated himself in a large gilded armchair, took up a writing quill, and began to write a long explication which he was intending for his journals, and which began with these words: ON THE PERNICIOUS INFLUENCE OF THE THEATER UPON THE MORALITY OF WELL-BRED YOUNG LADIES.

And all while the exasperated Duke wrote in his mansion on Regent's Street, let us behold what passed in a house with a very small exterior, in another area of London.

Three men were seated around a roaring fire. One of them automatically took up a crumpled and opened letter which was on the chimney mantel, and began to read it over again as he spoke.

"Upon my honor, Garrick," said Foote, the spirited actor, "I would swear that you know the author of these

poems."

"I swear on my honor I don't," replied Garrick, "but I am happy to reread them, since every time I find them full of merry words, phrases of a rare sincerity, and generally impressed with a pureness of the utmost honesty."

"And you could add that it somewhat flatters your ego," continued Foote.

"My ego!" replied Garrick. "That passed along like being twenty-five, and I can vouch to you without being daft that ever since I played Romeo at Drury Lane, I have received more than twenty praise-filled epistles and over fifty letters of flattery and true declarations of love."

"When I played Mithridates," interrupted Cibber, the old tragedian Garrick had supplanted for use in the primary roles, and who was plunged into an easy-chair, "I got more than one-hundred such letters."

"Today," replied Garrick, "it's difficult for me to read the ones that are addressed to me, caring little that I do for an admiration where one is so awe-inspiring, and for a love which proffers neither passion nor risk."

"When I played Mithridates," interrupted Cibber, "I likewise could scarcely bring myself to open them."

"And yet," said Garrick, tossing the letter upon the chimney, "I have read this one three times."

"Let's see," said Foote, "let's consider, what woman could have written these lines? Is she an actress, an entertainer, a noblewoman or a servant?"

"I would happily pay a guinea for the answer," said Garrick.

"When I played Mithridates..." said Cibber.

He could not conclude his phrase, for Foote interrupted him in speaking: "For me, I would wager that she is unattractive, pretentious, she has dull eyes, not many teeth, and is forty years old."

"Sir," was said unto Garrick by a valet who had entered, "a gentleman wants to speak with you in private."

"Who is he?"

"I have never seen him before."

"He wants to see me alone?"

"Quite alone."

"Let him in. Come, fellows," said Garrick to his two comrades, "we'll meet again, in an hour, at the theater, and goddamn this person who is chasing you off."

"Quite on the contrary," said Foote as he rose, "God bless him, can't you tell that this mysterious person is a messenger from the female author of that delightful letter?"

"I wish it were," said Garrick.

"This," said Cibber, "makes me remember a very interesting evening which befell me under similar circumstances, back when I played Mithridates."

"Very well, old chap," Garrick said hurriedly, "you can tell us about it tonight, for sure. Goodbye."

Foote and Cibber departed, the stranger came in. He was a man of elongated figure, in the form of a steward, who belonged to the Duke of Tavistock. Garrick had him take a seat. The steward ill at ease, ill mannered, ill seated, coughed, spat, crossed, uncrossed, recrossed his legs, and at last began with these words: "I wish to tell you, sir, of things I cannot say."

"This will be something of the utmost curiosity. I am

listening."

"I take it I can be assured of your discretion."

"I will be discreet."

"Sir," started the rising voice of the mysterious stranger —then he began to reconsider.

"Continue," said Garrick while leaning towards him curiously.

"Do you want to make five-hundred pounds sterling?"

"I don't understand."

"Would you like to make a very easy five-hundred pounds sterling?"

"I would be delighted."

"You can."

"I do not see how..."

"I can tell you how."

"Get on with it, for heaven's sake."

"You will be discreet?"

"As a deaf-mute."

"You swear to me?"

"I swear to you, but I conjure you, come to the facts."

"I'm getting there. A young girl from one of the best households in England is violently taken with a... this is going to sound incredible to you! Impossible! But I swear to you in faith that it's the honest truth. What can I say, sir? Her constitution is strange and she's out of her mind."

"For heaven's sake, spare me the commentary. With what has she been taken?"

"With a... may God himself forgive these faults. She is in love with... you will be discreet?"

"Yes... yes... yes..."

"She is in love with... an actor."

"That doesn't shock me; and who is the actor?"

"This actor," the man replied, surprised at the calmness of Garrick, "this actor, is you."

"Me!"

"Yourself."

"And this noblewoman, stooping to be in love with Garrick, herself sent five-hundred pounds sterling in order that he will return her affections, is that it?" said the actor forcefully as he rose to his feet.

"Listen," said the steward.

"Sir," continued Garrick electricly with a tone of outrage, "you say to this aristocratic lady that if she were to come herself to make me a similar offer, I would throw her out by way of my window, and I have a good mind," he continued while the poor servant trembled frightfully, "for doing much the same to her audacious errand-boy."

"Just a second! A second!" cried the poor man fumbling somewhat, "Quite the contrary—first listen to me, and you can decide afterward."

"Speak then, and be quick about it." The two of them again sat down together.

"The young lady who loves you," said the poor fool as he adjusted his jabot, "is completely unaware of my doings. Ever since she saw you playing Romeo, she walks around all day, reading and rereading from shameful literature, like Shakespeare and Chatterton, and writing poems about the moon and the stars; at night she makes her way to the theater, and fixates upon you as dumb and quiet as a statue. Finally, she refuses a wonderful marriage with a handsome young baronet,

weeping when her mother gets angry at her; in a word, she only has eyes for you, ears for you, and thoughts of you. Until today, by power of precaution, we'd been trying to keep secret all this humiliating passion, but now, despite the diligence of her lady's companion, she has sent to you, it's said, a letter which might compromise her."

"In essence," said Garrick, "it's a very lovely story. Continue."

"And her noble father, wretched and dishonored, as you can imagine, has come in desperation to offer a thousand pounds sterling to whomever can cure his daughter of this unhappy state, of this unlucky illness, of this miserable infirmity. The doctors have refused to attempt this cure, and being more bold than the doctors... is me, I have dared to do it."

"You, sir... and by what means?"

"I don't know anything, but I believe that you, the author of this disease, you can eradicate it, and I have come to offer you under this circumstance the means toward twenty-thousand pounds sterling."

"Then in that case, I could gain it all by myself," interrupted Garrick.

"But you wouldn't have any hope of gaining it, were I not to be persuaded today to give you the particulars," answered the steward dryly, "which one requires for cracking open these most welcome affections: I show you where the treasure is to be found... dig it up, dust it off, take it out... and we divide it up."

"What you have entrusted to me," said Garrick, "is very grave, is very unfortunate for the family, unfortunate for the

young girl, and on the other hand quite fortunate for you; I will make it possible to extinguish a passion which is nothing but illusion and fantasy, I will demonstrate that the masquerade is not a masquerade, and this too-fragile love will crumble, I hope, in the face of this proof... but I won't do any of it for money."

"As you wish... you do it all for the glory, and I'll do it for the money."

"You are welcome. So! May I have the name of the young lady?"

"Lady Anna, daughter of milord Doney, Duke of Tavistock... you will be discreet?"

"Yes, on the condition that you don't mix yourself up in any of it."

"Willingly."

"You'll receive news from me shortly... Adieu."

"See you soon."

The steward left as happy as if he had earned a gold sovereign; and Garrick was not able to stop himself from saying, seeing him passing through the street—"Insatiable sort, go...! Usurious sort, that sells for gold the fate of a kingdom...! If this confidence were not being made to a proper gentleman—such tears and despair could be the result! But, I have more loyalty than vanity..." and still dreaming about this singular adventure, he took the road to the theater where his friends were awaiting him. They hastened to ask a million questions about the stranger; but Garrick was discreet. And Cibber related to him the interesting details of what had happened to him back when he played Mithridates.

The Duke had completed his entry in his journal, in

which he demanded the closure of all theaters, the destruction of all printed works and the extermination of all actors, when the steward triumphantly entered his room and hastened to answer to him for the curing of his daughter.

"What!" the Duke said to him while rising in a rush.

"You'll make good on her cure?"

"Yes, milord."

"But how? How?" said the Duke with hope.

"I went to see Garrick..."

"And then?"

"I told him about the love that has been spawned for him by the heiress of the Duke of Tavistock, and we two minds have come together to destroy it."

"What! Miserable idiot," said the Duke as he turned purple with rage, "you have related everything to that wretch... and this scoundrel has promised to cure my daughter?"

"Yes, milord."

"Don't you know how these lecherous actors cure the women who love them?"

"No, milord."

"They take them on, provide them with a week of affection, a fortnight of jealousy, a month of revulsion, a lifetime of shame... and they call this a cure...!"

"You think milord, that he would dare...?"

"I think that you have come to lay my honor in the hands of this lowly ham... Holla! John...! John...!" cried the Duke at the door of the antechamber. John appeared. "Someone bring me my cane! The largest of all my canes—I wish to break the skull of this miserable steward."

John took no concern and returned shortly with an

enormous walking stick—but the prudent steward had disappeared through the back door, as soon as he had laid eyes upon the aforesaid walking stick. "...John!" cried the furious Duke, "follow that animal and smash his spine with that cane—I permit it, I order it—"

"Glad to, milord," said John as he brandished the cane, "I will beat for the both of us," and then went in pursuit of the fugitive.

The Duke spent the whole night dazed and feverish, and by morning, more grave than a senex iratus, more pale than one condemned to death, he brought himself to the home of Garrick. His presence interrupted the end of Cibber's interesting story, which he had not had the time to finish the day before. Garrick had the Duke come in through his study, and after an hour of entertaining him, the Duke reemerged, having recovered his usual attitude, calmness replacing his sharpness; when he took leave of the actor, he took his hand almost affectionately, and Garrick, though very distracted, made constraints to learn at last the conclusion of Cibber's story, which Cibber himself retold for the twelfth time.

We do not know what was said between Garrick and the Duke of Tavistock during that hour's interval; but the circumstances which followed we will soon be let to learn.

* * *

The young Lady Anna was relegated by her father to a summerhouse in Richmond, since the outraged Duke who wished to send his daughter away to the East Indies had begun by sending her two leagues out of London, in an effort to

persuade her on his own that it was absolutely the same thing, and the young miss was left to her fantasies—despite the efforts of Miss Holborn who, for her part, was recounting for her diversion and her amusement all the goings-on of the British seas; and she gave a remarkable description of the courage, the excellence of character and the importance in war of the navy midshipmen. Within all these narratives of the perceptive Miss Holborn, the navy midshipmen were lending a great deal more to the side of victory than the admirals themselves: it was always a navy midshipman who was engaging in combat, striking the enemy, taking prisoners, saving the equipment, and who at last died gloriously while devoting his final breath to his country and to the girl of his dreams. Miss Holborn had been, like all the old maids of England, loved very long past by a midshipman; that midshipman was dead, and his glorious death had at the time determined the victory, and also the celibacy of Miss Holborn, who, like all the old maids of England, had lost through a fateful lawsuit a considerable fortune, and she was discovered to be reduced to the position of a lady's companion. She was a damsel of forty-five years, large, lean, devout, smelling of Windsor soap, her hair done « *la Titus*, always bearing smelling salts, gown « *la vierge* and wearing gloves; rouged when the older gentlemen were occasioned a little freedom around her, and always eager to squeeze hands with the young men of eighteen years. In England, this type of old maid is very commonplace, but with little exception, they are all disagreeable, loud-mouthed, patriotic, ill-spoken chambermaids; they fashion themselves lady's companions the way that the bellboys fashion themselves concierges, but everyone just calls them old maids; Miss Holborn was an old maid/lady's

companion/chambermaid who was accompanying her mistress, Miss Anna, to Richmond, and now at this time come a few words about the young lady:

Miss Anna was a lovely creature of eighteen years. Her lively blue eyes made known her powerful mind; her somewhat disheveled blonde hair, lightly powdered a pale gray, complimented the whiteness of her forehead. Her serious air declared a character that was firm and resolute, but her smile betrayed her good nature. Her heart was gentle, all her motions were graceful, and her white neck—as one would expect of a blonde—inclined itself nonchalantly, and thereby gave her pretty head a melancholy pose. She possessed one of those souls for which a veneration, an idolization, was required, and which abandoned itself completely to an endless friendship as to a love without measure. Miss Anna's father was an excellent man, but noble in every sense of the word, and he fulfilled his position as a noble with a competence, a conscience, and a decided etiquette as coordinated and regulated as Napoleon's *Cinq Codes*. He took the obedience of his daughter for her love and her respect for her affection; the young miss had never discovered his accounting system, having in her mind a void to fill, in her heart an uncertainty to destroy. When she watched the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*, the heart of Garrick himself seemed sweet as a melody, his lines melancholy and powerful, with an electrifying poetry; and her young mind, avid and foolish, took on this pleasing image like a tattoo. Since then, her time was spent in recollections, sometimes in reading. Her soul offered praise, for her imagination was finding a sacred activity in this praising; then she wrote down these thoughts, for the writing was a necessity to her agitated mind, which

found some relief for its heaviness over the solitary notion. Did she love Garrick, or Shakespeare's Romeo, or the fantasy, or the poetry? This sentiment, which felt so sweet and profound—was it infatuation or true passion? This was something she did not know with certainty herself, but of this she was positive: something had cursed the poet and she had lamented the poet, something had ruined the actor and she had developed for the actor so much greater an interest and admiration that everybody else appeared to be biased against him, and that from the example of many women of the world who, in such times as these, had addressed some flattering verses towards the great talents of the day, she came to address herself to Garrick; and it was, as we have previously told, due to this that her outraged father, having thrown the full weight of his wrath upon her, came to mercilessly send her to the East Indies, which is to say... not to the East Indies, but to his summerhouse in the vicinity of London. The young lady had been there for several hours...

Miss Holborn was assisting in making her toilette, when a man of about forty years old, dressed in green and yellow livery, brusquely entered the room at the same moment the valet came to announce him, and cried out in a voice that was low-class and crackling: "Oh pretty! Pretty! Miss, you're as lovely as Venus. Sorry, if I say too much, but a compliment for a lady is always welcome; and otherwise, let me take a seat, for when I was coachman, I was always in the carriage, in the driver's seat of course; but all the same, I ain't used to this footman business, and now that I'm without a placement I have to trudge down the road like a vagrant. I'm taking a seat... don't worry yourselves, armchairs weren't meant for us dogs." Then

he put himself quite at ease on a sofa, laid his hat on the floor and took a pinch of snuff.

The young miss watched him with surprise, and Miss Holborn with disgust; the gallant coachman stretched out his arm to offer *un pris* to the lady's companion who recoiled in horror, and the fellow, without being put out of countenance, regally returned the snuffbox to his pocket and continued: "When one is without placement... I said to myself, with a morality beyond reproach, there's no need to be upset... when one is known to love the horses like they're his own brothers, take heart; one step backwards, two ahead; and so I am come here to offer my services to the daughter of the Duke of Tavistock—who can well decide whether she'll take me under her direction. She'll be satisfied, and I as well, that I ain't losing nothing by the change, for I have willingly quit that actor Mr. Garrick, who in almost two years has given me more beatings than bonuses."

"Very well, my good man," said Miss Holborn while pursing her lips... "someone will speak with the Duke about you... now go...!"

"But why," said the young miss, curious to know for too long, "why have you quit the service of Mr. Garrick?"

"Because, fair lady," responded the coachman, "that there man, is a mess that neither God nor Devil knows the taste of—one day he's rolling in gold and gives it out like it's air, and the next, he's destitute and not got a shilling for a pint of porter—and then he's changing women like his luck, and his lodgings like his shirts—sleeps all day, parties all night; one moment he's sweet as a lamb, an hour later, he's nasty as a sailor."

"Nasty as a sailor!" echoed Miss Holborn indignantly.

"They're the most virtuous men in all England!"

"The most virtuous!" interjected the coachman, "Thank you, much obliged; one plainly sees that you've never seen a sailor except in the literature; myself, I've seen them in the pubs, and I tell you sailors and actors are right on par with one another—as much as it's true that Mr. Garrick uses a whip to lash his servants and his women, too. The women, I don't see anything wrong with, but the servants, that's quite a different matter."

"How could it be," miserably said the defeated young miss, "that Mr. Garrick would deign to beat a woman?"

"Rather more than a woman!" replied the coachman.

And the young girl sighed wretchedly.

"That such a man should be on the loose!" said Miss Holborn haughtily.

"Ah! Those ladies... it's too bad for them," he went on, "as far as they're concerned, he's not the one running after them, they're the ones that come seeking him out. They see him at the theater, are wooed, they write him lovey-dovey letters, and once they're bit, they're itching for him. In the end I don't pity them—it's always the ones that he hits hardest who return the most often. But coachmen do have a heart, and as the saying goes: A driver who bruises soon loses, and so that's the reason I'm come straight here to Richmond to seek employment; for I can never return home to a monster like that. Richmond... that is two leagues, and I've swallowed more dust than food on the way! I've such a dry, dry throat..." Then he began to cough and cough, and his horrible fit put an end to his words. "...Pardon me, ladies, have you anything to drink...?"

“You drank enough this morning,” said the screechy voice of Miss Holborn, who had run out of patience.

But the younger lady was alarmed by the horrible coughing of the poor man, who began afresh and much better after being supplied with a bottle of wine, which he emptied whilst making a thousand protestations of his integrity, and above all of his sobriety... In no time the wine had gone straight to his head—and having grown more merry and more at ease, he shocked them with a ribald folk-song, and made every effort to embrace the modest Miss Holborn who was forced to leave, in order to call the valets which she charged with escorting the importune and overzealous coachman out of the house.

No sooner had Miss Holborn set foot outside of the room than did the coachman straighten up, take on a serious mood, and present a letter to the young lady while speaking in a whisper: “From Mr. Garrick... I'm sorry I was forced to scare off your chambermaid, it was necessary in order to leave this... Be assured, I have done my duty, and I am returning to Mr. Garrick's service.” Then he left in a rush.

The young miss wished he would call back to make it known that all these awful things which were said about the actor were false, but there was no time. She thereby observed the letter with worry, opened it with trepidation, and read these words:

Forgive me, madam, that I have performed, in order to be close to you, the role of my own servant. An actor is an unlucky man who dishonors any woman that he dares to approach undisguised. The preservation of your honor is my

secondmost devotion... my first, is the dizzying love that I hold for you.

D. Garrick.

And the very light-headed young miss read and reread the letter without going so far as to absorb it, and once she had unwillingly come to her senses, she crumpled up the note, while saying sorrowfully to herself:—"Why! That rude fellow... that drunkard... that was Garrick... that was Romeo... that was he!" Then she buried her beautiful eyes between her two hands, and marched about her seat, for she felt faint.

Miss Holborn soon returned, finding her young mistress pale and wan. "I absolutely knew it," she said, hastening to provide her with her smelling bottle, "I absolutely knew that the stench that that drunkard was releasing into this room was going to be bad for your health. Dear me! Lord, how it reeks of commoners in here," she went on with a prudish refinement, "My nerves are quite shot..." Then she opened the window very wide, gulping up air like a fish; and she observed stopping before the gate of the yard the carriage of the Duke of Tavistock, who had come to pay a visit to his daughter.

At this new interruption, the young miss hurried to conceal the letter, wiping at her eyes and forcing a smile which was poorly painting over the traces of her distress. The Duke feigned on arrival that he had no reason to be suspicious of her, and he displayed an almost excessive affection which she was far from expecting. He was accompanied by an old friend the girl had never met before; he introduced them as usual, the young girl greeted him with her customary sweetness, and the stranger solemnly rendered back his salute. This man was a fine

physical specimen and appeared to be about forty years old. His outfit, black from head to toe, gave his every move a sort of severity, so Miss Holborn, curious as any old maid, wondered whether he was a priest, doctor or attorney—but as if she didn't have the power to imagine anything but those three things. She took the part of overtly eavesdropping on the conversation whilst the Duke and his guest emptied a bottle of claret, hoping to uncover thereby whether the somber fellow was an attorney, priest or doctor, and thus did she hear this:

“So, my friend,” said the Duke, “you are not with me in going to the King to demand the suppression of the theaters?”

“Quite on the contrary, my dear Duke, I ask that the theaters receive some aid and assistance, persuaded as I am that the theater is a sanctuary of art; it arrests, excites and distracts; wrenches the heroes from their tombs and the old memories from oblivion.”

The young miss, who till that moment had had no cause to be pulled from her meditations, was struck nevertheless by these last words of the stranger. In turn she raised her head to apply an eager ear, and the Duke responded:

“My friend, you speak of some happy benefits the theaters might create; but you don't say a word about their pernicious influence, nor of the evils which they produce, nor of the dangers which they effect.”

“Dangers, you say? Like what?”

“What!” returned the Duke swiftly, “Have we not seen the youths of illustrious families, abandoning their simple and honorable lives in order to race and roam the world for excitement, expecting and searching for the stardom of these theatrical heroes, who turn from thieves into emperors, who

from simple laborers become martyrs admired by nations; and do you not also see the young ladies rejecting marriages which would provide them with a lifetime of comfort and prosperity, because the man they are offered does not sufficiently resemble these heroes of passion, these lovers of tragedy, invented by some poet inflamed with an hour of mysticism and adoration; and are these not real dangers?"

"In effect," responded the stranger, "these are dangers; but they are born out of misjudgment, not from the existence of shows. Demolish the misjudgments, but let the theaters live on. Demonstrate to all of them that the sinister décor is nothing but painted tarp, that the abyss is only a trapdoor, and the inferno is just a lit torch—teach everyone that the actor has nothing on his shoulders but some locks of false hair, that his complexion is nothing but powder, that his fresh face is nothing but makeup, and that all his fair speech is nothing but lines written in whisper which he repeats out loud. And surely say as well, that after having played noble Hamlet or handsome Romeo, usually the actor, pale and pathetic, wretchedly returns home as tired by his evening out as a busy laborer is each evening after his day's work—or else he remains braving his weariness to drink and to disgracefully intoxicate himself for the rest of the night; and when you have successfully convinced of everything your readers and your listeners, then—long live the theater! It means one has come to admire the talent of a painter who has made up some darkened vaults on a sheet of canvas, the speech of an actor who has made himself older or more youthful; if the actor knows the part, is as great as the poet, as expressive as the idea, and as strong as the drama, you applaud the actor; if the work is moving, you weep with the

actor; you laugh with him if the piece is comical; you talk about it the next morning, even remembering it by the evening, pretty masquerade, pretty tale and pretty lie that it is; and you have found distraction and emotion through the theater, which I assure will have lost its 'pernicious influence.' Indeed, my dear Duke," he continued as he rose to his feet, "All this is true, quite true, and if time would permit me to converse any longer, I would have liked to convert you likewise today. But, *au revoir*, and our followup to our discussion will be for another day."

"I look forward to it," said the Duke as he shook his hand.

The stranger bowed to Lady Anna and took leave of the Duke of Tavistock.

And when he had made his departure, the Duke asked of his daughter what she thought of his old friend.

"He seemed to me to be intelligent and overall, astute," replied the young girl. "...Yes, I think him to be quite wise," she added, after a moment's reflection.

"He's a friend I don't dare to acknowledge," said the father.

"And why should that be?"

"Because he is an actor."

"An actor!" said the young girl with surprise.

"Of whom you have doubtless heard mention," continued the father, "by the name of Garrick."

"Garrick!" repeated the stricken young girl.

"How, milord," cried Miss Holborn most inappropriately, "can this attorney, this doctor... be an actor?"

"In addition you are a loud-mouthed simpleton who

always has an ear on the lookout," the Duke declared with anger. "Get out, and put your affairs in order."

Miss Holborn took on an expression like a frightened owl and left, profoundly humiliated.

A vivid red developed rapidly in the cheeks of the young Anna, who had realized that Garrick and her father had come to her just then to provide her with a great lesson and a great counsel; and it followed that when she found herself alone with the Duke, she drew close to him, rested her head upon his chest and began to cry. She shed tears for her destroyed illusion, for the end of her lovely dream; and the father, pressing her against his heart, inwardly blessed with all the strength of his soul the actor whom he had cursed so many times before.

At length becoming the wife of the baronet, Lady Anna also became friends with the estimable Garrick, who always treated her with a respectful reserve.

Thirty years later, the actor's voicebox had given out, his forehead was wrinkled, his body bent with age and abuse; the heiress of the Duke of Tavistock had lost her girlishness and her hair had whitened, at which point the pair of them having occasion to reminisce together, Garrick did sigh most sadly.

The Duchess asked him of the reason.

And then, for the first time, Garrick admitted to her that he too had been in love with her.

There was a long silence. The eyes of the aged actor met those of the elderly Duchess, and they took each other by the hand.

>~~~*~)-(*~~~<

Selected Bibliography in English

This story is the first known translation of Bouchardy's work into English. English researchers into Bouchardy's life & work, or into other variations of the story as discussed in the introduction, are directed to the following:

- Beraldi, Henri. "Bouchardy (Joseph)." *Les Graveurs du XIXe Siecle*, Vol. 2. 1885. Librairie L. Conquet: Paris.
- Disher, Maurice Willson. *The Last Romantic: The Authorised Biography of Sir John Martin-Harvey*. 1948. Hutchinson & Co: London.
- Gautier, Théophile. *A History of Romanticism*, from his *Collected Works*, 1900. Edited & Translated by F.C. Sumichrast. George D. Sproul & The Brainard Publishing Co., NY.
(Written by Bouchardy's friend and fellow Bouzingo co-founder, several variations of this set exit from the turn of the century, but it has since been published only by facsimile printers. It can found online at archive.org.)
- McCormick, John. "Joseph Bouchardy: a melodramatist and his public," in *Performance and Politics in Popular Drama*, ed. David Bradby, Louis James, & Bernard Sharratt. 1980. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- Robertson, T.W. *David Garrick: A Love Story*. 1865. S.O.Beeton: London.
- Whitman, Alfred. *Samuel William Reynolds*. 1903. G. Bell & Sons: London.

Websites For Bouchardy & the Bouzingo Group:

- <http://bouzingo.blogspot.com/>
- <http://www.sylvie-lecuyer.net/lepetitcenacle.html>

Online texts of Bouchardy's plays in French:

- <http://gallica.bnf.fr>
- <https://archive.org>

Link to French text of Garrick Médecin via:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garrick_M%C3%A9decin

Though virtually forgotten today, **Joseph Bouchardy** (1810-1870) was a co-founder of the Bouzingo group, the first self-declared “avant-garde” collective, blending political radicalism, gothic-horror subculture, experimental literature and art, and the transformation of everyday life.

Trained as an engraver, he soon turned to playwriting, and produced many popular melodramas full of deception, disguise, double-crossing, violence, and convoluted, labyrinthine plots often taking place in labyrinthine settings.

This drole tale, written in 1835 on the cusp of Bouchardy's switch from engraving to drama, is his first work ever translated into English. In it, Lady Anna has fallen in love at a performance of *Romeo and Juliet*—but does she love the famous Romantic actor Garrick, or the character of Romeo, or the play itself? In any case, her father has offered £20,000 to anyone who can cure her infatuation.

Bouchardy swings the reader deviously back and forth between wistful sentiment and disillusioned irony. He also sheds some light on Romanticist attitudes toward theatre, history, truth, fiction, and the blending of life and art.

The Revenant Series publishes translations, histories, and new editions of works related to the 19th Century avant-garde, including the Romanticist, Frenetic, Occultist, Utopian Socialist, Bohemian, Parnassian, Decadent, and Symbolist communities.

Sept, A.Da. 99

A.H. 185

2015 C.E.



mOnocle-Lash Anti-Press
REVENANT SERIES

monoclelash.wordpress.com

monoclelash@gmail.com

Translation ©Talia Felix